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JACK ANDERSON

CIA, Moonies Cooperate in Sandinista War

In the Central American hinterlands, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish CIA operatives from the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's disciples. They appear to be working in harness against the communist-tainted Sandinista regime in Nicaragua.

This troubles at least one Pentagon analyst, now stationed in Korea, who has warned the White House that the CIA-Moonie connection could cause possible political damage to President Reagan's reelection campaign.

The analyst's unofficial memo, "Potential Problems," has been slipped to my associate Donald Goldberg.

"Current Moonie involvement with government officials, contractors and grantees could create a major scandal," the memo warns. "If their activities and role become public knowledge, it will unite both the left and the right in attacking the administration."

The memo continues, "If efforts are not taken to stop their growing influence and weed out current Moonie involvement in government, the president stands a good chance of being portrayed in the media as a poor, naive incompetent

who is strong on ideology and weak on common sense

"The likelihood of a reporter or a Democratic staff member piecing the total picture together is too great to be neglected. Any thought that this festering problem will go away if ignored is foolish."

The "total picture" of Moon's activities in Latin America is not clear. But there is no doubt that the Korean messiah, now in prison for income tax evasion, has established a solid presence in the region, with ties to right wing groups and U.S.-supported guerrillas.

My associate Jon Lee Anderson reports from Central America that Causa International, Moon's political front, has representatives working in programs that help the CIA in its "contra" war against the Sandinista government.

Causa maintains a publicity office in Tegucigalpa, the Honduran capital, but its principal activities are in the field. Causa provides cash and other aid to Honduran-based Nicaraguan contras and Honduran right wing political groups. Many anti-Sandinista guerrillas wear red Causa T-shirts, with a map of the world on them.

But Causa and its affiliate, the Refugee Relief Freedom Foundation, provide more than T-shirts to rebel groups. They also funnel supplies to refugee families in and near contra camps and pay for trips by rebel leaders to the United States.

One contra leader, Fernando (El

Negro) Chamorro, told my associate that as early as 1981, Causa representatives sent him on an all-expenses-paid trip to the United States to try to unify the Nicaraguan exile groups.

The airlift of supplies to the rebels by Moon's Unification Church has escalated since Congress cut off CIA funding for the contras. The administration has been attempting to "privatize" its war against the Sandinistas and is apparently willing to work with Moon's people.

Footnote: A Unification Church official denied that the church is engaged in any but religious activities in Central America.